

Five Minutes on the Roof of the World

Jon Krakauer, author and mountaineer primarily known for his writings about the outdoors, particularly mountain climbing, was a member of an ill-fated expedition to the summit of Mount Everest in 1996. Disaster struck during the descent, and 12 of his team members were killed.

Journalist Krakauer was on assignment for *Outside* magazine. Afterwards, he published the bestseller *Into Thin Air*, which related his experience. In the first pages of his book, he wrote:

Straddling the top of the world, one foot in China and the other in Nepal, I cleared the ice from my oxygen mask, hunched a shoulder against the wind, and stared absently down at the vastness of Tibet. I understood on some dim, detached level that the sweep of the earth beneath my feet was a spectacular sight. I'd been fantasizing about this moment, and the release of emotion that would accompany it, for many months.

But now that I was finally here, actually standing on the summit of Mount Everest, I just couldn't summon the energy to care ... I snapped four quick photos ... then turned and headed down. My watch read 1:17 p.m. All told, I'd spent less than five minutes on the roof of the world.

Few of us will spend even five minutes on top of the world. But should we be so fortunate, we have no reason to believe that our experience would be any more fulfilling than Jon Krakauer's. That's because the meaning and significance we long for cannot be found atop Mount Everest, or in any other situation. It is only offered to us in the person of God Himself.

No matter how grand our goals or how spectacular our accomplishments or how hard we work to achieve them, they all will fail to fulfill us in the way we hope. These are but vain idols; they will leave us, like Krakauer, standing there staring "absently at the vastness" below us.

True contentment comes from living in obedience to the will of God, finding meaning and purpose in the plan He has for each of us. Simply stated, God desires for us to love Him and love others.

We demonstrate that in the work of Life Care and Century Park, exercising the gifts our Lord has given us.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace (1 Peter 4:10 ESV).

What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? (Matthew 16:26 NIV)

– Beecher Hunter